

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY ATHLETIC COUNCIL**

October 15, 2003

ATTENDEES:

Harold Leff, Hunter Mill District
Barbara R. Lowrey, Mason District
Wesley M. Viilo, Jr., Mt. Vernon District
David Lacey, Sully District
Mark Abbott, Alternate, Sully District
Jeffrey E. Stein, Town of Clifton
Sam Althoff, Town of Vienna
Roger Sims, Fairfax County Baseball/Softball Council
Sharon Sealock, Alternate, Fairfax County Adult Softball Council
John Nolan, Fairfax County Soccer Advisory Council
Deborah Honaker, Alternate, Fairfax County Soccer Advisory Council
Sally Entlich, Fairfax County Women's Sports Programs
Paul Jansen, Fairfax County School Board
Brian Daly, Fairfax County Park Authority
Patricia Franckewitz, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Christopher Leonard, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Karen Avvisato, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Kristen Cigler, Department of Community and Recreation Services
Brian Dreyer, Department of Community and Recreation Services

ABSENTEES:

Joseph E. Jozefczyk, Braddock District
Roger Smith, Dranesville District
Dick Combs, Lee District
Stephen McLaughlin, Providence District
Patricia Junkin, Springfield District
Elizabeth T. Bradsher, Member-At-Large
J. Marcelo Gangotena, Diversity-At-Large
Jerry Carter, Town of Herndon
Robert L. Panek, Fairfax County Girls' Fast Pitch Softball
Carl Coan, Fairfax County Adult Softball Council
C. McClain Haddow, Fairfax County Youth Basketball Council
Mark Meana, Fairfax County Football Board of Commissioners
Tricia Johnson, Fairfax County Volleyball Council
Kevin Fay, Fairfax County Park Authority
Ernestine Heastie, Fairfax County School Board

GUESTS:

Amy Craig, Community Use, Fairfax County Public Schools
Rocky Styer, Fairfax County Youth Football League

Meeting Opening – Mr. Lacey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Roll call was taken but a quorum was not present at this time.

Chairman's Report – Mr. Lacey spoke about plans for the next Sports Forum. The Forum will be held on Sunday, February 8, 2004. Topics to be covered at the Forum are proposed revisions to the gym policy, opening and closing of athletic fields and Character Counts awards.

Mr. Lacey spoke about the \$300K funds. He said that the committee will be going back to the organizations who submitted requests to see if they wanted to continue with their projects or if they have been withdrawn or completed through other funding sources. Mr. Lacey stated that some money would be held back for maintenance of irrigation systems.

Committee Reports

Gym Policy Committee - Mr. Lacey reported out on the Gym Policy Review Committee. Issues that are being considered are new sports, primary seasons, standardized team size, standardized practice times and standardized game times. The committee plans to present a draft to the Council at the November meeting. Public hearings will be scheduled for March and April 2004. The proposed policy will go to the Board of Supervisors in June or July 2004 and be in effect with the winter 2004/2005 gym season.

Bylaws Committee – Ms. Entlich reported on the Bylaws Review Committee. Issues that are being considered are the make-up of the Council, the purpose of the women's sports representative, and Fairfax County residency requirements for FCAC membership.

Matters of Interest from Governing Bodies

Board of Supervisors – Nothing to report

Fairfax County Public Schools – Nothing to report

Fairfax County Park Authority – Nothing to report

Department of Community and Recreation Services – Ms. Franckewitz announced that Brian Daly had been promoted to Director of Operations for the Park Authority.

Ms. Franckewitz reported that CRS would be reviewing the new field policy to see how it is going. CRS is also working on refining the tournament policy. A joint CRS/FCPA committee for maintenance fees has been formed and will begin to work with the Council in December or January.

Mr. Lacey reported that FCPS does not appreciate the need for communication (especially in middle and elementary schools) with CRS. They fail to notify CRS of cancellations, or do so at the very last minute. The groups then show up only to have to turn around and go back home. Ms. Franckewitz reported that CRS is aware of the communication issues and hopes that the new FCPS scheduling/communication system will alleviate this problem.

New Business – Mr. Lacey reported that athletic field users are overwhelmed with the recent field closures (sniper, extreme weather, hurricane, etc). Mr. Lacey would like the opportunity for user groups/FCPA/FCPS to step outside the box regarding field closing decisions. He would like to see flexibility in making decisions on field openings and closings. If groups are currently given the ability to close fields, they should also have the ability to open fields. These groups put a tremendous amount of money and hard work into these fields, only to be shut out of using them.

Mr. Sims questioned why the FCPA works on a five-day week, instead of a seven-day week, like other jurisdictions. He was also concerned with field closing decisions being made on Friday for the entire weekend when some fields become playable on Saturday and even more on Sunday.

Mr. Nolan reported that user groups get irritated when the fields are closed, but yet walk-ons go out and use the fields anyway.

Ms. Sealock questioned why there was no staff available to check the fields, but there was staff available to remove people from the fields.

Mr. Sims reported that all sports have officials. The officials have to make sure that the fields are safe for play or else they are liable.

Mr. Stein reported that he personally checked all of his fields and spent many hours getting them ready, only to find out later that they were closed. Mr. Stein expressed his concerns over the fact that his organization complied with the closings while others did not.

Mr. Daly stated that he polled his staff and no one can remember a year as bad as this one in regards to field closures. He and his staff are frustrated as well.

Mr. Daly reported that they learn new lessons after every decision and are working on the problem.

Mr. Lacey reported that even opening just a couple of fields is better than none. This can make or break a program.

Mr. Viilo questioned why high school teams were allowed to practice during the hurricane weekend when all fields were closed. Mr. Jansen reported that he assessed the situation and allowed football to practice if the areas were safe. Mr. Jansen is reviewing that decision and is not sure he would make the same decision next time. Mr. Lacey is pleased that the issue is being discussed and is looking forward to a compromise.

The December meeting, originally scheduled for December 17, has been changed to December 10. Mr. Lacey requested that the Council be notified of this date change.

Old Business – Mr. Nolan wanted to know the status on the FY2004 distribution of the sports subsidy. He stated that the Council had promised the clubs that the new system would allow the distribution of the funds soon after the activities met the required August suspense date and that the committee had met and agreed on any changes required. He also stated that he had submitted his data before he left, which excluded the teams that had paid coaches in accordance with the new policy. He said that he knew of no committee meeting that had been held. Ms. Avvisato responded that they were working on it and that personnel problems had delayed the final product for submission but that they would have it shortly.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Cigler
Acting Secretary